

Board Approves Extension Of Fish, Wildlife Projects

The State Fish and Game commission Monday approved a \$194,000 maintenance program for 12 federal aid fish and wildlife projects in Idaho and voted a \$28,700 expansion in the department's fish feed storage plant at Eagle.

It heard recommendations from three units of the Idaho Outdoors association asking for:

1. Stricter enforcement of fishing laws on the middle fork of the Salmon river.

2. A halt to steelhead fishing on parts of the Clearwater until repairs are made on fish ladders at Washington Water Power company dam at Lewiston, and

3. A demand that the department end its "guesstimates" in conducting big game head counts in the Minidoka National forest.

Groups Fail to Agree

But the three groups, representing association chapters in Boise, northern Idaho, and Twin Falls, failed to agree on reduction of the statewide fish creel limit from 20 to 15—a proposal endorsed by the Fish and Game department.

Arlie Johnson, president of the Boise chapter, asked that the limit be cut to 15 fish or seven pounds and one fish. The association chapters in District 2 asked that the limit be kept the same. The Twin Falls chapter made no proposal on the subject.

Ross Leonard, Fish and Game department director, said the expansion in the cold storage plant at the Eagle fish hatcheries would increase its fish feed capacity by about 400,000 pounds. The plant now holds about 40,000 pounds.

State Center at Eagle

The work would make the Eagle plant a fish feed distribution center for all of Idaho, Leonard said. The state will bear all of the cost.

Idaho will pay one fourth of the maintenance costs approved by commission for 12 federal aid projects. They included:

1. Continuation of the statewide bird game survey and habitat improvement projects, \$64,000.

2. Maintenance of the Hagerman refuge, including the Valley county wildlife management area, \$20,000.

3. A biological survey of fisheries resources in Lake Pend Oreille, \$14,000.

4. Renewal of the statewide fur resources survey, \$18,400.

5. Sand Creek wildlife management area in Fremont county, \$11,700; Star Lake WMA, \$11,300; Farragut WMA, Kootenai county, \$10,400; primitive area winter range maintenance, \$6,200; Boise river deer and elk winter range maintenance, \$7,300; Boise River deer and elk winter range maintenance, \$7,300; Boundary county refuge maintenance, \$8,900, and stream improvement on Slate creek, \$12,000.

Limits Out-of-State Shipments

The commission also decided to limit the validity of fish and game shipping permits to 10 days to prevent sportsmen from taking their catches out of Idaho more than once on the same permit.

It closed Gray's lake to muskrat trapping because of a drop in animal population there and authorized department employees to get rid of state-owned pack horses and rent them for \$3 a day in the future.

The north Idaho chapters in district 2 of the Idaho Outdoors association asked for the closing of the Clearwater river to steelhead fishing from the junction of the Snake to the Washington Water Power company dam at Lewiston until repairs are made in the dam's fish ladders.

Their other recommendations included requests that minerals be prohibited for use as bait in the Snake river except for sturgeon and ling, the bag limit for bass be changed from 12 pounds and one fish to 10 bass or 10 pounds and one fish, and that the department "give more explicit information as to the amount of fish raised at state fish hatcheries."

The Twin Falls chapter asked that licenses be revoked from one year to life for persons convicted of negligently causing hunting accidents, and that big game counts in the Minidoka National forest be based on "guaranteed actual counts instead of guesstimates."

Proposals of the Boise chapter included requests that set lines for sturgeon fishing in the Snake river be abolished, that fishing laws be enforced more strictly in the middle fork of the Salmon river to protect salmon beds, and that the Snake river be opened to night fishing from Massacre Rock to the American Falls dam.